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QPR v Arsenal

Before every Arsenal fixture, we'll bring you a Scouting Report on the Gunners' next opponents.

Arsène Wenger's side face Queens Park Rangers at Loftus Road on Wednesday. To find out more, we asked tactical expert Michael Cox.

MICHAEL COX

Queens Park Rangers might be struggling at the wrong end of the Premier League table, but that's largely due to their dismal away form.

Their record at Loftus Road is much more impressive, and having twice gone ahead in a 2-2 draw with champions Manchester City earlier in the season, they're certainly capable of giving the big boys a fright.

Chris Ramsey is still finding his feet as manager having succeeded Harry Redknapp earlier this year, and while QPR might benefit from having a weekend off coming into this game, they're also suffering from a number of injury problems, with particular worries at right back and in the centre of midfield.

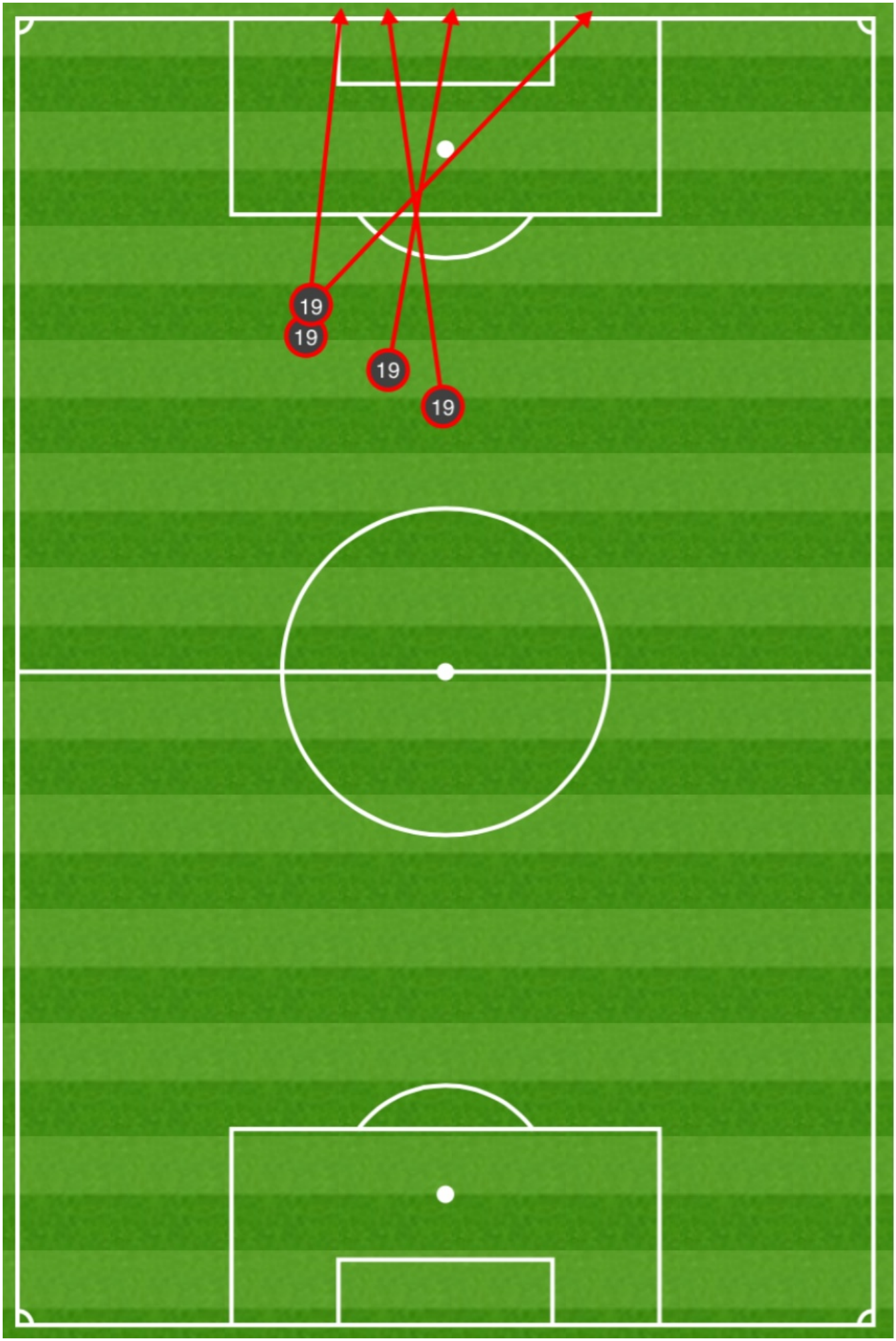
Harry Redknapp

At right back, both Nedim Onuoha and Mauricio Isla look set to be unavailable, which means youngster Darnell Furlong is likely to make only his second league appearance, having started

against Hull last month.

The highly-rated Furlong - the son of Paul, who scored against Arsenal for Chelsea 20 years ago - should develop into a fine player, but Arsenal should test his defensive ability in the opening stages.

In midfield, Joey Barton is suspended and Leroy Fer out injured, so barring a surprise return for Sandro, it could be a makeshift midfield duo of tough-tackling Karl Henry and the more creative Niko Kranjcar, who continually attempted long-range shots in the reverse fixture on Boxing Day.



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iko Kranjcar's long shots in the reverse fixture

In truth, Ramsey would probably want to play three central midfielders, but injuries mean he's likely to be restricted to a 4-4-2 formation.

Bobby Zamora and Charlie Austin should start up front, therefore, and provide Arsenal with something of an old-fashioned forward threat. Zamora works the inside-channel well, brings down long balls expertly and has often caused Arsenal problems over the years, while Austin is more of a penalty-box poacher.

Matty Phillips and Armand Traore are likely to start in the wide positions and get up and down the touchlines manfully. Adel Taarabt, who excelled in this fixture three seasons ago, was handed a surprise start against Southampton recently but is unlikely to play on Wednesday.

Charlie Austin

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